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ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE**  
2125 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115  
Majority (202) 225-2927  
Minority (202) 225-3641

December 15, 2022

Dara Khosrowshahi  
CEO  
Uber  
1455 Market St. Ste 400  
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Khosrowshahi:

We write with significant concerns regarding the use of Uber Connect to transport illicit and deadly substances, including fentanyl to Americans across the country. Earlier this year, Ann Portillo tragically lost her 22-year-old daughter, Alex, to a fentanyl poisoning. The drugs which killed Alex were sent through Uber Connect. We have questions as to how you are preserving the integrity of this emerging delivery option that has promoted competition for legacy delivery options.

In June of 2020, Uber released a blog post promoting the use of Uber Connect as an easier way to send packages to others. Uber Connect is advertised as “an easy, same-day, no-contact delivery solution that allows people to send items whether it’s a care package for a loved one, a gift for a friend’s birthday, an item you sold online, or an important business document.”<sup>1</sup> Uber Connect is also advertised as a direct form of mail, delivering a package from one person directly to another.

We have championed the development of new technologies and the benefits and convenience which the gig economy provides our constituents – especially during labor shortages that hurt delivery and mobility options for Americans. However, this new innovative method for transporting essential goods may also be taken advantage of by bad actors looking to move illegal or harmful products to unwitting Americans, including children.

Republican members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce previously sent letters to the CEOs of social media companies and the Department of Justice regarding the fentanyl

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.uber.com/en-US/blog/uber-connect-ondemand-package-delivery/>

crisis facing American families and the need for social media companies to do their part.<sup>2</sup> However, it appears this crisis is not limited to the scope of social media companies. Too many families, like Ann's, across the country have lost a child or loved one to a fentanyl poisoning. Just as we have asked social media companies to do their part to curb the sale of drugs on their platforms, Uber must act to ensure Uber Connect is not used to transport untracked shipments of illicit drugs to Americans.

Given our concerns over Uber Connect being used to transport illicit and deadly substances, or other illegal or dangerous products, we ask that you provide a briefing to Committee staff. In addition, we ask that you respond to the following questions no later than January 5, 2023.

1. Please explain the agreement terms that Uber Connect has in place for the following participants in its delivery ecosystem:
  - a. The sender of a package;
  - b. The driver of the package; and
  - c. The recipient of the package.
2. According to reports by NBC News, some Uber Connect drivers have raised concerns to Uber about certain individual requests to transport packages that may contain illicit drugs. For instance, one driver said "All I could see inside was one little baggy that had two crystallized forms in there.... Immediately, I assumed it was some kind of narcotic."<sup>3</sup> An Uber spokesperson said, "When we receive this type of report, our global safety team investigates and may take actions ranging from deactivating the relevant account to reporting the issue to law enforcement."<sup>4</sup> In accordance with this reporting:
  - a. Have you taken any actions as a result of an Uber Connect Driver's complaint? If so, please outline such action.
  - b. Please detail the scenarios in which you would cooperate with law enforcement, and the scenarios which you would deactivate a user's account.
  - c. What steps have you taken to mitigate such transactions occurring on this service apart from acting on the reports of drivers?
3. How many accounts have been deactivated as a result of shipping packages that contain prohibited contents?

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<sup>2</sup> <https://republicans-energycommerce.house.gov/news/press-release/ec-republican-leaders-demand-big-tech-does-more-to-stop-illegal-fentanyl-sales-on-their-platforms/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/uber-drivers-drug-mules-connect-rcna38464>

<sup>4</sup> *id*

- a. What actions do you take to ensure the user of the deactivated account cannot rejoin Uber under a different account? If none, please explain why.
  - b. Does Uber coordinate or communicate with other companies offering similar services to prevent users of deactivated accounts, whose accounts were deactivated after attempting to transport prohibited items, from activating an account on another service?
  - c. Have accounts been deactivated for a different reason? If yes, please detail the number of deactivated accounts and the reasons for such deactivations.
  - d. Since this reporting, have there been any additional requests for information related to transporting illicit products from law enforcement related to Uber Connect? If so, please detail those requests and whether or not you cooperated.
4. According to Uber policies, minors are unable to use the platform without consent of a parent. Please explain the safeguards in place to prevent harmful packages from being delivered into the hands of children.
  - a. What tools does Uber provide to parents if their child is a user of Uber Connect?
5. What information do you collect from the recipient of a package delivered on Uber Connect?
6. What information do you collect from the sender of a package delivered on Uber Connect?
7. What are the responsibilities of a user requesting a package be delivered using Uber Connect?
8. What preparations, packing, labeling, and description of package contents are required to use Uber Connect?
9. Uber Connect is currently available in Canada, Mexico, Australia, and the United States (U.S.). Are packages allowed to be transported from one country to another?
  - a. If yes, what collaboration have you conducted with Customs and Border Patrol to examine any packages that are shipped to the U.S. from Mexico or Canada?
  - b. What controls are you under in other countries where you are providing services?
10. Do recipients of any packages sent via Uber Connect need to consent to receive a shipment, or can a sender request a package be sent to any location without Uber verifying a recipient and their willingness to accept a package?
11. What options does a driver have when they receive a request to transport a package that they believe includes an item prohibited under the terms of using the service? Do you encourage

or educate Uber drivers to report or turn over suspicious packages to law enforcement? If yes, please explain such encouragement or education. If no, please explain why.

12. What rights of refusal do Uber Connect drivers have for packages being delivered via Uber Connect?

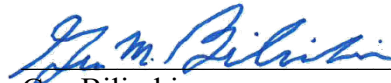
13. Do recipients of a package transported through Uber Connect need to have an account with Uber?

Please contact Brannon Rains at the Committee on Energy and Commerce at (202) 226-8824 to schedule a briefing and if you have any questions about our request. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



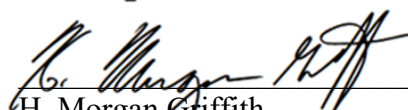
Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Republican Leader  
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Gus Bilirakis  
Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection  
and Commerce



Robert E. Latta  
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